

# Devon and Severn IFCA News

## Illegal Net Seized from the River Taw, North Devon

### D&S IFCA's Enforcement Officers react to a reported illegal net in the River Taw

On Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> July, information was provided to D&S IFCA on the 24-hour duty phone number (07740 175479) from an Officer in the Environment Agency. The information received related to a suspected illegal net placed in the River Taw, Barnstable near Long Bridge.

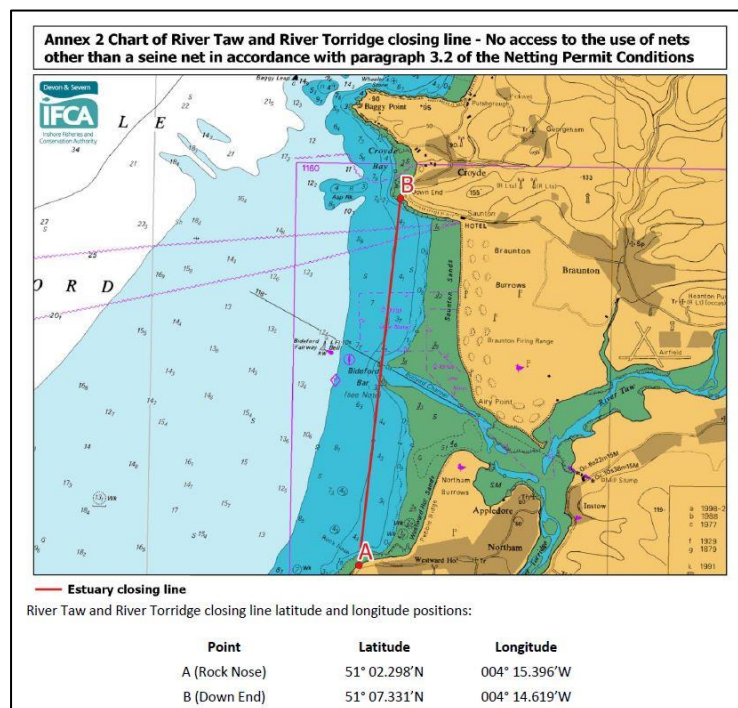
Netting within the D&S IFCA's District is regulated via the [Netting Permit Byelaw](#) and the associated [Netting Permit Conditions](#). Other than the use of seine nets for the capture of sand eel, netting (as defined in the Netting Permit Byelaw) within defined estuaries including the Taw Torridge Estuary is prohibited.



### Relevant Section of the Netting Permit Conditions

#### 3.2

*In the estuaries to the landward of the coordinates set out in the attached Annex 2 of this permit, a permit holder or named representative is not authorised to use any net other than a seine net and providing that;*



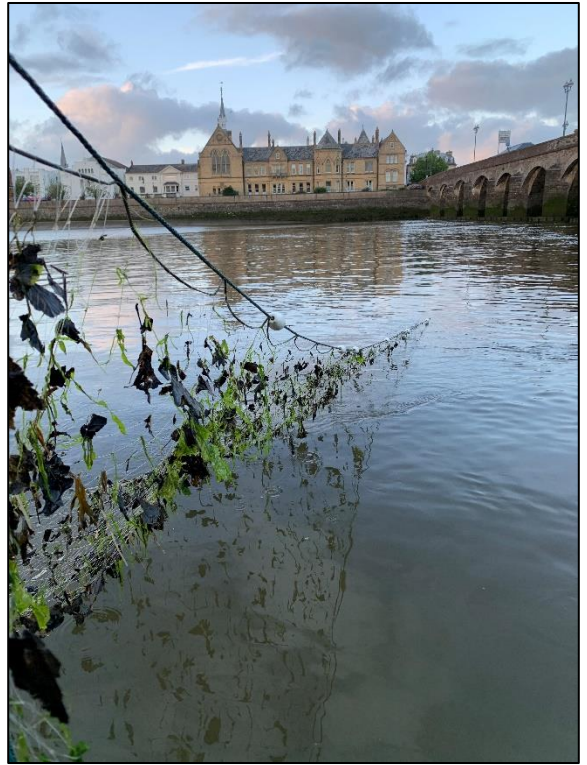
*a) the net measures no longer than 20 metres in length;*

*b) all species caught other than sand eel are returned immediately to the water;*

*c) the size of mesh does not exceed 20mm.*

Two D&S IFCA Enforcement Officers were finishing a patrol in South Devon in the late afternoon when they received a request to investigate the reported net. Knowing that the net may have been retrieved that evening, the officers reacted and planned a patrol to investigate the report.

D&S IFCA Officers arrived in Barnstable in the early evening. As the tide approached low water, a few headline floats appeared on the top of the water. Although there was access from the road to the foreshore, the muddy conditions made it difficult for the net to be retrieved as it was stuck fast. Enforcement Officers dismantled part of the net so that a line could be passed to the roadside and then they were able to slowly remove the net by attaching it to a vehicle and towing it out of the water.



All of the net was removed which, although contained no fish, did contain a lot of weed.

It is suspected that the net had over time become clogged with weed which fish can sometimes see and therefore they are able to avoid the net.

### **Reporting Suspicious Fishing Activity**

Our enforcement work is targeted, and intelligence led, so if you see anything suspicious then please do not hesitate to contact the D&S IFCA Office on 01803 854648 or the 24-hour duty phone number 07740 175479.

A list of officers' emails and mobile telephone numbers are also listed on the D&S IFCA website – [Contact Us Page](#).